



Pearson
Edexcel

USA Study Guide 2024

A guide for international school students
planning to study in the USA



About Pearson

Pearson is the world's leading learning company. We provide world class assessments, digital content and learning experiences for schools to enable more effective teaching and learning and to help learners increase their skills and global employability prospects.

Our academic and vocational qualifications are world renowned and include Pearson Edexcel International GCSEs and International A levels (IAL®), studied by students in more than 100 countries. Anchored in the quality and traditions of the British education system, our international qualifications and assessments are supported by an unrivalled package of teaching, learning, and exam resources and pre- and post-exam services.



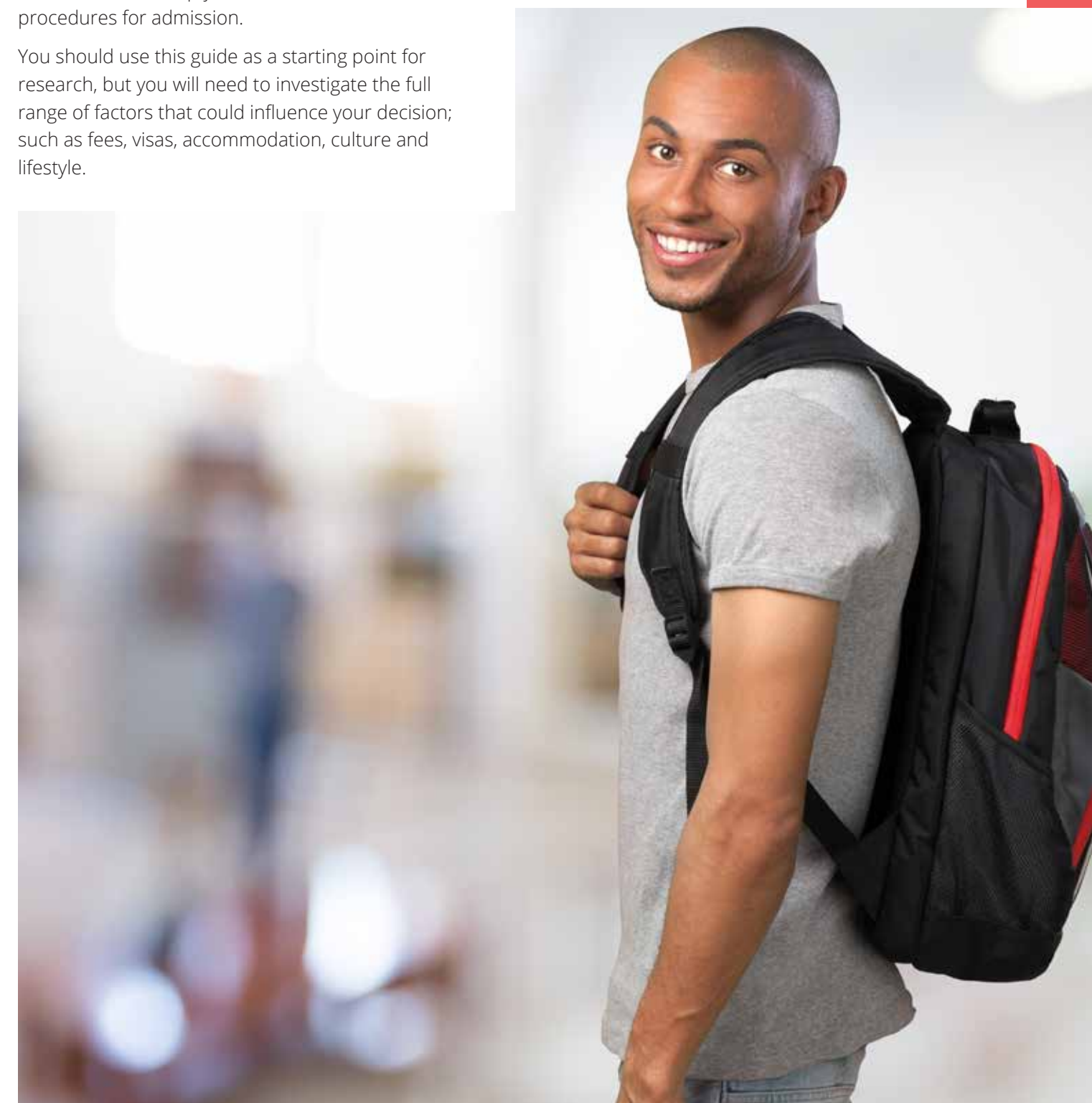
About this guide

Studying Pearson Edexcel International GCSE and International AS/A level qualifications opens the door to higher education around the world. This guide highlights key information for international students thinking about applying to university in the United States to help you understand the broad procedures for admission.

You should use this guide as a starting point for research, but you will need to investigate the full range of factors that could influence your decision; such as fees, visas, accommodation, culture and lifestyle.

At the end of the guide, we have provided a list of universities that have signed recognition statements with Pearson Edexcel.

Good luck with your applications!



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Share your progression story with us!

We are always excited to hear from our Pearson Edexcel international student community so if you'd like to share your progression to university story with us once you're settled, please email us at internationalschools@pearson.com, we'd love to hear from you!

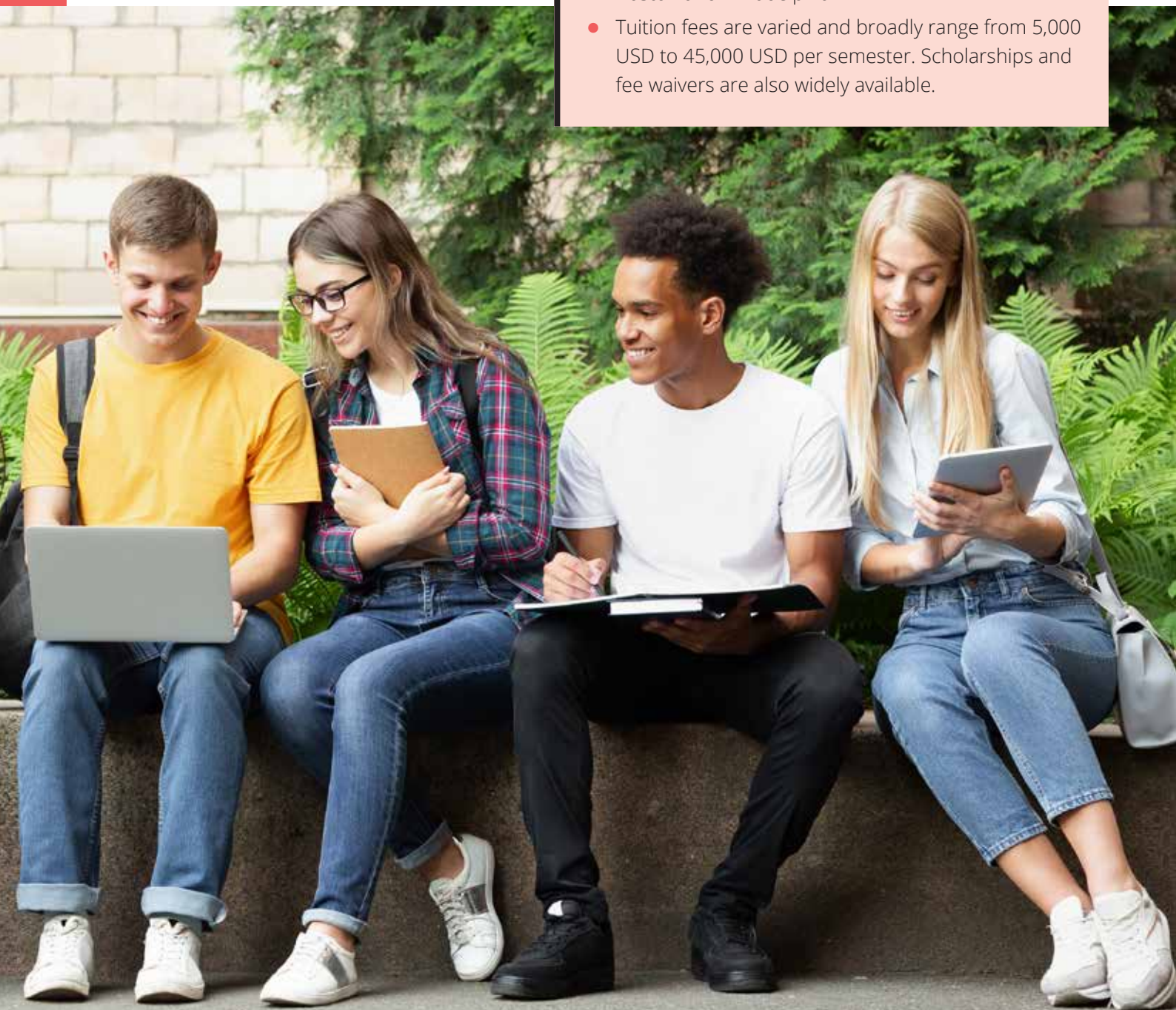
Destination USA

US higher education institutions

With a wide variety of academic programmes and top-ranked institutions, the United States offers a wealth of higher education opportunities for international students.

The USA in brief

- Over 4,000 higher education institutions
- More international students than any other country
- Six universities in the world top 10 (THES) and five universities in the world top 10 (QS)
- Leading student cities with more than 300,000 students include New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston and Philadelphia
- Tuition fees are varied and broadly range from 5,000 USD to 45,000 USD per semester. Scholarships and fee waivers are also widely available.



About US universities

US university types

There are an estimated 4,000 institutions and universities and other higher education institutions in the USA. US universities are commonly referred to as colleges and there are three main types:

- **Community colleges:** these are state institutions with open admissions policies. They mostly offer two-year associate degrees from which students commonly transfer onto bachelor's degree programs. Tuition fees are generally low.
- **Public universities and colleges:** these are large, state-funded institutions that have lower tuition fees but more students.
- **Private universities and colleges:** these are smaller universities funded by private donations, tuition fees and grants. The opposite of public colleges, they have higher fees but fewer students.

The world's top universities

The US has several of the world top 10 universities.

According to the [Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2023](https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2023/world-ranking), these include:

- 2nd: Harvard University
- 3rd: Stanford University
- 5th: Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
- 6th: California Institute of Technology (Caltech)
- 8th: University of California – Berkeley
- 9th: Yale University

According to the [QS World University Rankings 2022](https://www.topuniversities.com/world-university-rankings/2022), these include:

- 1st: Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
- 3rd: Stanford University
- 5th: Harvard University
- 6th: California Institute of Technology (Caltech)
- 10th: University of Chicago

Times Higher Education World University Rankings: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2023/world-ranking>
QS World University Rankings 2022: <https://www.topuniversities.com/world-university-rankings/2022>

The best known group of prestigious colleges is called the American Ivy League. These are:

- Brown University (Rhode Island)
- Columbia University (New York)
- Cornell University (New York)
- Dartmouth College (New Hampshire)
- Harvard University (Massachusetts)
- University of Pennsylvania (Pennsylvania)
- Princeton University (New Jersey)
- Yale University (Connecticut)

US university semesters

The US academic year is divided into two semesters; fall that runs from mid-August to December, and spring that runs from January to May.

15 academic credits are usually considered to be a full semester of work.

Types of degrees

There are two main types of undergraduate degree on offer in the USA:

- **Associate degrees:** take two years to complete and are usually studied at community colleges. Students can study for an associate qualification in a range of subjects and then transfer to a bachelor's programme to complete an additional two years of study to gain a bachelor's degree. Associate degrees usually require 60 credits to complete.
- **Bachelor's degrees:** take four years to complete. Students study a variety of subjects before deciding on which to focus on in the final two years, known as a 'major'. Students may also gain a 'minor' qualification by completing classes in an additional subject alongside their 'major'. Bachelor's degrees usually require 120 credits to complete.

The US application process

Research your options

In such a large country with a huge choice of universities and colleges, research is essential.

There are several elements that you will need to consider:

- **Location:** the US has six time zones and a number of different climates. Consider the size of city that you want to study in and the accessibility of that city from your home country.
- **Your course of study:** not all degrees are available at undergraduate level. Medicine, Veterinary Science, Law and Pharmacy are studied as graduate degrees. In most cases you will be able to follow a range of courses in years one and two before selecting your major in years three and four.
- **Start your research early:** so that you can meet application deadlines which can in some cases be very early. You can obtain support from official advisors all over the world.

Consider finance

You will need to research the costs of tuition and living costs; both vary considerably. With planning you may be able to reduce the costs or obtain support.

You can find the cost of tuition on many university websites, and you can also obtain information on open scholarships from the US Department of Education and from the Fulbright Commission.

You may also be able to reduce the cost of tuition by obtaining credit for International or UK A or AS levels.



Make your application

Most universities and colleges take a holistic approach to admissions. All aspects of an application are considered although undoubtedly performance in school exams are the most important part.

There are several ways to apply to US universities. Many universities will give you the option of applying directly or through an app giving you the option of applying to multiple universities:

- **The Common App:** is the most common and accepted by over 900 universities.
- **The Coalition App:** is accepted by over 100 universities and then individual applications are only accepted at some others.

The Common App allows you to apply to up to 20 universities at once. You can enter your A level results in the Testing Section under Senior Secondary Leaving Examinations. You will need to upload one of two essay questions and include details of extra-curricular activities.

Recommendations letters are also required; these should come from your school and potentially other people as well such as internship supervisors, sports' coaches etc.

You may also be asked for standardised test results such as SAT or ACT although it is worth noting that many colleges have made standardised tests results optional. You should research the college requirements before applying.



Find an official advisor: <https://educationusa.state.gov/find-advising-center>
Common App: <https://www.commonapp.org/>
Coalition for College: <https://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/>
NACES: <https://www.naces.org/>

GPA is the grading system used by US high schools and you might be asked to convert International A level letter grades or International GCSE 9-1 grades into GPA. You should approach a NACES approved credential Evaluation Agency to have a report produced.

You may also be able/asked to have an interview either with a member of the admissions team or an alumni representative.

If English is not your native language, you may be asked to provide proof of English language knowledge – Pearson PTE, IELTS and TOEFL tests are widely accepted. Many universities will waive the requirements for a test if you have been schooled in English (i.e. as part of an International or UK A level course).

It should be noted that the university will make a decision whether to offer you a place based on your complete application; meeting minimum grade requirements may not be enough to ensure admission.

The advantages of Pearson Edexcel qualifications

Widely recognised for US university admissions

There are advantages to applying for university admission in the USA with Pearson Edexcel GCSEs and A levels.

Pearson Edexcel A levels are widely recognised in the USA for admission to higher education institutions, and additionally completing Pearson Edexcel International A levels (IAL®) may permit you to obtain higher education credits in the USA.

You should verify with the university to which you are applying, the exact amount of credit they are willing to offer.

Example 1: Indiana University (IU)

Indiana University provide a range of [different credits](#) from 1st year courses for different International A levels. Depending on the combination of A levels, you can obtain a full year of credit.

For example, a student applying with International A level grades CCC in Chemistry, Biology and Maths could obtain as much as 31 credits. You can check the amount of credit you can obtain on the IU online calculator.

Example 2: ECE

As one of the leading credential evaluation agencies in the US, ECE work with hundreds of colleges throughout the USA. ECE recommend that credit be given to Pearson Edexcel International A levels (IAL®). You can read their statement on [our website](#).

Example 3: IERF

IERF are a leading credential evaluation agency working with hundreds of colleges throughout the USA. They recommend that completed International A levels should receive [six to eight college semester credits](#) per subject.



Indiana University credit for advanced coursework: <https://ois.iu.edu/admissions/apply/freshman/advanced-coursework.html>
ECE statement of recognition of A levels and BTEC awards: https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/Support/services/progress-to-university/ECE_Statement_on_Recognition_of_A_Levels_and_BTEC_awards.pdf
IERF semester credits statement: https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/Support/services/progress-to-university/IERF_Statement_Updated.pdf

US universities recognising our qualifications

Universities that have signed recognition statements

The following universities have signed recognition statements confirming that Pearson Edexcel International GCSEs and International A levels (IAL®) are recognised for admission to their degree programmes. We update this list every month so for the latest information, please see our progression and recognition website.

US University	Website
Adelphi University	www.adelphi.edu
American University	www.american.edu
Andrews University	www.andrews.edu
Aquinas College	www.aquinas.edu
Arizona State University	www.asu.edu
Arkansas State University	www.astate.edu
Austin College	www.austincollege.edu
Barry University	www.barry.edu
Bellarmino University	www.bellarmino.edu
Bellevue University	www.bellevue.edu
Berkeley College	www.berkeleycollege.edu
Binghamton University, State University of New York	www.binghamton.edu
Boston University	https://www.bu.edu/
Brandeis University	www.brandeis.edu
Bryant University	https://www.bryant.edu/
Buena Vista University	www.bvu.edu
California College of the Arts	www.cca.edu
California Institute of Technology	www.caltech.edu
California State University	www.calstate.edu
California State University, Monterey Bay	www.csumb.edu
Carleton College	www.carleton.edu
Carnegie Mellon University	www.cmu.edu
Claremont McKenna College	www.claremontmckenna.edu
Clark University	http://www.clarku.edu
Cleveland State University	www.csuohio.edu
Coe College	www.coe.edu
College of Charleston	www.cofc.edu
Colorado State University	www.colostate.edu
Columbia University	www.columbia.edu
Cornell University	www.cornell.edu
Concordia St. Paul	www.csp.edu
Daemen College	www.daemen.edu

US University	Website
Dartmouth College	www.dartmouth.edu
Drexel University	www.drexel.edu
Duke University	https://duke.edu
Duquesne University	www.duq.edu
East Carolina University	www.ecu.edu
Eckerd College	www.eckerd.edu
Emory University	www.emory.edu
Florida Institute of Technology	http://www.fit.edu
Florida State University	www.fsu.edu
George Mason University	www.gmu.edu
Georgia Institute of Technology	www.gatech.edu
Georgian Court University	www.georgian.edu
Grinnell College	https://www.grinnell.edu
Hamilton College	www.hamilton.edu
Hawaii Pacific University	www.hpu.edu
High Point University	www.highpoint.edu
Humboldt State University	https://www.humboldt.edu
Illinois Institute of Technology	http://web.iit.edu
Indiana Wesleyan University	https://www.indwes.edu
Indiana University – Bloomington	www.indiana.edu
Johns Hopkins University	www.jwu.edu
Johnson and Wales University	www.jhu.edu
Kennesaw State University	https://www.kennesaw.edu
Kent State University	www.kent.edu
Linfield University	www.linfield.edu
Long Island University	www.liu.net
Lourdes University	www.lourdes.edu
Loyola Marymount University	http://www.lmu.edu
Lynn University	www.lynn.edu
Marquette University	www.marquette.edu
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	web.mit.edu
Menlo College	www.menlo.edu
Miami University Ohio	http://miamioh.edu
Michigan State University	www.msu.edu
Michigan Technological University	www.mtu.edu
Monroe College	www.monroecollege.edu
New York Film Academy	https://www.nyfa.edu
New York University	www.nyu.edu
North Carolina State University	www.ncsu.edu
Northeastern University	www.northeastern.edu
Northern Arizona University	http://nau.edu
Northern Michigan University	www.nmu.edu
Northern State University	www.northern.edu

US University	Website
Northern Virginia Community College	www.nvcc.edu
Northwest Missouri State University	http://www.nwmissouri.edu
Northwestern University	www.northwestern.edu
Northwood University	https://www.northwood.edu/
Notre Dame de Namur University	www.ndnu.edu
Oklahoma City University	www.okcu.edu
Oklahoma State University	www.okstate.edu
Old Dominion University	www.odu.edu
Oregon State University	http://oregonstate.edu
Pace University	www.pace.edu
Pacific University Oregon	www.pacific.edu
Pepperdine University	www.pepperdine.edu
Pitzer College	www.pitzer.edu
Portland State University	https://www.pdx.edu/
Purchase College	www.purchase.edu
Purdue University	www.purdue.edu
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	www.rpi.edu
Rhodes College	www.rhodes.edu
Rice University	www.rice.edu
Rochester Institute of Technology	www.rit.edu
Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design	http://www.rmcad.edu
Rutgers University - Newark	www.rutgers.edu
Sacred Heart University	www.sacredheart.edu/usa
Saint Louis University	www.slu.edu
Saint Peter’s University	www.saintpeters.edu
Smith College	www.smith.edu
Southern Illinois University	http://siu.edu
Southwestern Adventist University	www.swau.edu
St. Edward’s University	www.stedwards.edu
St John’s College	www.sjc.edu
State University of New York at Brockport	www.brockport.edu
State University of New York at Cobleskill	www.cobleskill.edu
State University of New York at Fredonia	www.fredonia.edu
State University of New York at Old Westbury	www.oldwestbury.edu
State University of New York at Plattsburgh	http://www.plattsburgh.edu
St. Michael’s College	http://www.smcvt.edu
Stetson University	http://www.stetson.edu
Suffolk University	https://www.suffolk.edu/
Sullivan University	http://sullivan.edu
Temple University	https://www.temple.edu/
Tennessee Tech University	www.tntech.edu
Texas Christian University	http://www.tcu.edu

US University	Website
Texas Tech University	www.ttu.edu
Texas Wesleyan University	www.txwes.edu
The New School	www.newschool.edu
Truman State University	www.truman.edu
Tufts University	www.tufts.edu
Tulane University	www.tulane.edu
University at Albany, The State University of New York	www.albany.edu
University of Akron	www.uakron.edu
University of Alabama	www.ua.edu
University of Arizona	www.arizona.edu
University of California, Berkeley	www.berkeley.edu
University of California, Davis	https://www.ucdavis.edu/
University of California, Irvine	https://uci.edu/
University of California, Los Angeles	http://www.ucla.edu/
University of California, Merced	https://www.ucmerced.edu/
University of California, Riverside	https://www.ucr.edu/
University of California, San Diego	https://ucsd.edu/
University of California, San Francisco	https://www.ucsf.edu/
University of California, Santa Barbara	https://www.ucsb.edu/
University of California, Santa Cruz	https://www.ucsc.edu/
University of Charleston	www.ucwv.edu
University of Chicago	www.uchicago.edu
University of Cincinnati	https://www.uc.edu
University of Colorado at Denver	www.ucdenver.edu
University of Colorado Boulder	www.colorado.edu
University of Delaware	www.udel.edu
University of Denver	www.du.edu
University of Florida	www.ufl.edu
University of Georgia	www.uga.edu
University of Houston	www.uh.edu
University of Houston Victoria	http://www.uhv.edu
University of Idaho	www.uidaho.edu
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	https://admissions.illinois.edu/
University of Iowa	www.uiowa.edu
University of Maine	https://umaine.edu
University of Massachusetts Amherst	https://www.umass.edu
University of Michigan	www.umich.edu
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities	https://twin-cities.umn.edu/
University of Mississippi	www.olemiss.edu
University of Missouri	http://missouri.edu
University of Missouri-St Louis	www.ums1.edu
University of Montana	www.umt.edu
University of Nevada Las Vegas	www.unlv.edu

US University	Website
University of New Haven	www.newhaven.edu
University of New Mexico	www.unm.edu
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	www.unc.edu
University of North Florida	www.unf.edu
University of Oklahoma	www.ou.edu
University of Pittsburgh	www.pitt.edu
University of Portland	www.up.edu
University of Richmond	www.richmond.edu
University of Rochester	www.rochester.edu
University of South Carolina	www.sc.edu
University of South Florida	www.usf.edu
University of Southern California	www.usc.edu
University of St. Francis	http://www.stfrancis.edu
University of Texas at Arlington	www.uta.edu
University of Texas at Austin	www.utexas.edu
University of Texas at Dallas	http://www.utdallas.edu
University of Vermont	www.uvm.edu
University of Virginia	www.virginia.edu
University of West Georgia	www.westga.edu
University of Wisconsin-Madison	https://www.wisc.edu/
University of Wisconsin-Stout	www.uwstout.edu
University of Wisconsin-Superior	www.uwsuper.edu
Utica College	http://www.utica.edu
Vanderbilt University	www.vanderbilt.edu
Virginia Commonwealth University	www.vcu.edu
Washington and Lee University	www.wlu.edu
Washington University (Seattle)	www.admit.washington.edu
Webster University	http://www.webster.edu
Wesleyan University	www.wesleyan.edu
Westcliff University	https://www.westcliff.edu/
Western New England University	www.wne.edu
Westminster College	www.westminster.edu
West Texas A&M University	www.wtamu.edu
Whittier College	http://www.whittier.edu
Whitworth University	www.witworth.edu
Wichita State University	www.wichita.edu
Widener University	www.widener.edu
Williams Woods University	www.williamwoods.edu
Wilson College	www.wilson.edu
Woodbury University	www.woodbury.edu
Xavier University	http://www.xavier.edu
Yale University	www.yale.edu
Young Harris College	http://www.yhc.edu

Why choose Pearson Edexcel as your qualifications provider?

Our qualifications heritage stretches back over 150 years

As the world's leading learning company and the UK's largest exam board, Pearson's qualifications heritage stretches back over 150 years, our modular and linear qualifications are offered in more than 100 countries worldwide with a choice of paper-based and onscreen assessments, and we mark over 10 million exam scripts per year on behalf of the UK Department for Education.

Today, we partner with more than 6,500 schools, universities, and employers worldwide:

- at school level, to offer Pearson Edexcel International and UK qualifications to over 3.5 million students annually;
- at university level, to ensure Pearson Edexcel qualifications are recognised and accepted by universities all over the world;

- and with employers, by building 21st century skills into our qualifications at the outset, to ensure learners have transferable skills alongside the knowledge they need to progress into the careers of their choice.

Pearson Edexcel is regulated by Ofqual, ensuring our curricula meet the highest standards and our exams follow carefully controlled procedures at every stage of development, delivery, marking and reporting. As the largest exam board in the UK, Pearson Edexcel regularly achieves the highest marking accuracy of all UK boards.

What this means for you

You can trust Pearson Edexcel's international qualifications and curricula; thousands of students around the world follow our Early Years Foundation Stage, iPrimary and iLowerSecondary curricula, moving on to Pearson Edexcel International GCSEs before progressing onto International A levels (IAL®) and to the world's most respected universities.

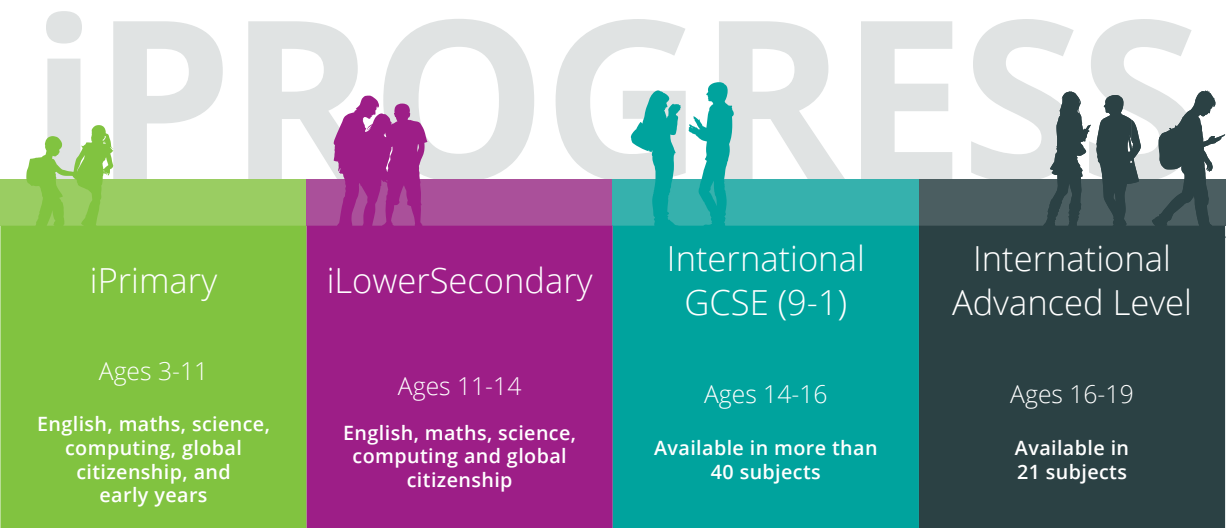


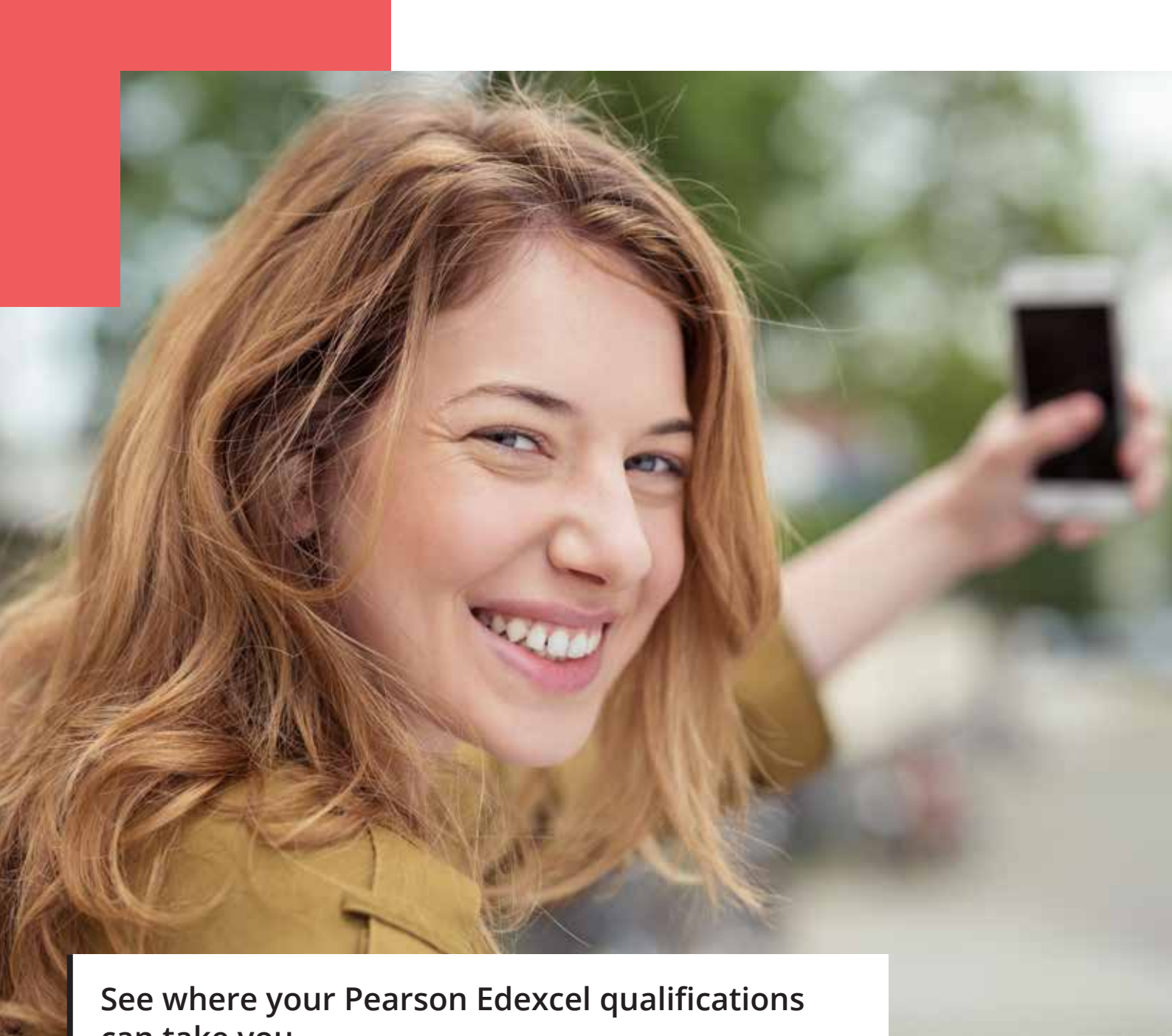
Progress with Pearson Edexcel

Our Pearson Edexcel iPrimary, iLowerSecondary, International GCSE, and International A Level qualifications are most closely aligned to the British education system, delivering a broad and balanced curriculum and providing a consistent learning journey for students and teachers.

Our qualifications and assessments are supported by an unrivaled package of teaching, learning, and exam resources and services including:

- planning, teaching and learning support
- curriculum-matched published resources
- training and professional development
- pre- and post-exam and results services.





See where your Pearson Edexcel qualifications can take you

W qualifications.pearson.com/progress-to-university

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in [Pearson UK and International Schools](https://www.linkedin.com/company/Pearson%20UK%20and%20International%20Schools)

W blog.pearsoninternationalschools.com